<u>Asbury Park Press</u> - November 6, 2009 By KIRK MOORE

A weekend visit to Afghanistan persuaded Rep. John Adler, D-N.J., that he should support any forthcoming request for more troops from the Obama administration because there is a clear chance to "achieve definable success" for America's goals there, the congressman said Thursday.

"We went over there wondering if there's an end game for the U.S. in Afghanistan," said Adler, who was part of a six-member Congressional delegation who returned Monday after a couple of days in Kabul, on American bases and walking streets in secured Afghan villages.

Talking to American troops and seeing their results on the ground reassured Adler that he should support sending more troops, to take advantage of "the chance for long-term sovereignty and stability" for Afghanistan.

"Where we've put new troops in recent months, we've had enormous success," Adler said in a telephone press conference.

The delegation toured Nawa, a town on the Helmand River in southwest Afghanistan where Marines mounted a major offensive against Taliban militants last summer. Nawa has become something of a showcase for the U.S. military's new strategy, with shops reopening and businesses and farmers willing to make new investments amid the new security.

"So we've brought some level of stability to a region that was overrun by Taliban a few months ago," Adler said. "We were not wearing flak jackets... We were told it was safe."

Adler said he doesn't know what the right number for reinforcements is, and generals who talked to the delegation declined to be specific about those numbers.

The recent fatal attack by a turncoat Afghan policeman who killed five British troopers pointed up persistent problems with getting reliable Afghan forces to take on security. Adler said local police forces have had more problems with corruption and desertion than the Afghan National Army, and "by and large the officers on the ground on the American side are confident" the

Afghan force will continue to improve.